



Crawley Town Supporters Alliance AGM

11th March 2024

7:30pm

Zoom

Welcome: Reuben Watt, Chair of the CTSA, welcomed everyone to the CTSA AGM.

Apologies: In total there were 20 members in attendance along with 15 people who had sent their apologies to the meeting.

Approval of minutes: The minutes from the last AGM that took place in February 2023 were approved by those present.

Chair's address: Reuben gave the following address: "We last held our AGM back in February 2023 during a very turbulent time for the club. We had just gone a year with 5 or 6 different managers, a number of key players leaving and the off the field antics often making the headlines over our playing. Thankfully, the antics have quietened down since then. Thanks to Scott Lindsey and Jamie Day a lot of the talking is now being done on the playing field. Having been favourites to be relegated, we find ourselves on the edge of the play offs. Who would've thought that? I know a lot of people will be losing their money from the relegation odds at the beginning of the season. We have also unearthed a number of hidden gems and some great players.

This season, the club announced Sam Jordan as the fan representative on the board and has completed the owners and directors' test. This was a big step for the club, and one that the owners should probably have done a lot earlier in their tenure.

A huge thank you needs to be said to all of the staff members at the club, at the fans forum it was mentioned that there are 5 staff members which is a tiny amount for a professional football club. They have been working tirelessly behind the scenes and most of their work goes unseen.

It is hoped over the next year or so an independent regulator will be brought in. This is extremely important and can't come soon enough. All too often now we are seeing teams such as Southend, Reading, and Swindon making the news due to ownership issues and it is time that is changed. Whilst at 3pm on a Saturday we are rivals, we never want to see a club go under particularly as a result of owners. and their decision making.

There are also plans to improve the EFL Fan engagement standards that it is similar to the Premier League one. This would include having a fan advisory board, and a requirement for each club to publish a fan engagement plan at the start of the season. This will be voted at the next EFL AGM will plans to begin at the beginning of the next season. Although just a few hours ago, we heard that the Premier League couldn't reach an agreement on the EFL Deal which would have seen £500 million a year coming down to the EFL. This is a huge shame and could have been the difference for some clubs between surviving and dying.



The final thing I want to touch on is to say a farewell to our long serving treasurer Simon. Simon announced, I think late last year, that he was wanting to step down as treasurer. He has worked tirelessly behind the scenes and not enough thanks can be said to him. Simon, we have organised a gift for you and but we will communicate offline as to the best way to get it to you. It is a small token of our thanks. Hopefully we may see you at a Crawley game soon! With that, I will pass over the Simon to talk about his report.”

Report of Treasurer and acceptance of the accounts: Simon Smith, Treasurer, said the below: “This is the AGM for the year ended June 2023.

To recap, the role of the Treasurer of CTSA is to ensure that:

- Proper records are maintained
- The accounts are supported by receipts and an audit trail
- The accounts are independently examined each year
- The correct regulatory process followed – including with the Financial Conduct Authority
- The constitution of the CTSA is maintained under trust rules as established by Supporters Direct.

Firstly on the accounts.

During this financial year, the finances of the CTSA remained stable with a small surplus of just over £1200. Part of this was our share of the Reds Rollover.

Overall the CTSA remains in good financial health with credit balances of £25,600.

The accounts will now be independently examined and after the AGM they will be filed with the mutual registry at FCA.

It is worth stressing that as a supporters trust the CTSA has clear aims and objectives as set out in the constitution, published on the website. These rules are now used by almost 200 trusts up and down the country.

Secondly the CTSA is both registered and regulated, with accounts publicly available and the directors accountable to the Financial Conduct Authority.

he CTSA is a limited company. It's registered, it's regulated, our accounts are publicly available to anybody who wants to look, and the directors are all listed each year in the annual return that goes to the Financial conduct Authority. So the role of the trust is slightly different from the old fashioned supporters club type model and it's always been a goal of the CTSA, in the time that I've been involved, to have a meaningful say in the running of the club. That's gone a step forward this year with Sam's involvement. But the balance of the bank account is money that we've kept aside in the hope that at one day we might have a small shareholding in the club, even if it's a symbolic one.”

The accounts were then voted on and approved by those present.



Simon reiterated that he was stepping down as treasurer and as a board member after 12 years. However, Jack Woolsey, a chartered accountant and with experience as a director at the Sussex County FA, will be taking over from him. Reuben thanked Simon for all of his hard work and welcomed Jack to the role.

CTSA Membership: Ever since membership was made free back in October 2022, the membership numbers have remained consistent at around the 500 mark. Reuben mentioned that he, along with the CTSA Board, will look at the CTSA Membership package and what can be offered.

Reds Rollover: This year's Rollover is just under halfway through where there are around 50 participants. However, Louie Elmer, who is currently overseeing Reds Rollover encouraged those present to join via the website.

The CTSA did attempt to try and give the money, raised through Reds Rollover, to the club back in the Ziya Eren days. However, we were not ever given bank details or a location as to where the money should be sent - we still have a couple of seasons' worth to give. Members were emailed in December 2022 to decide on donating or holding money to end of the season. 90% voted no. There will now be a vote to take place for Reds Rollover members on what the money will be used for

Currently there has been one idea put forward. This has been proposed by Steve Leake for the money to go towards a more permanent CTFC Museum which would be located in the fans zone. There will be an opportunity to hear from others around the idea of the money. However, these will all be put in a vote.

Those present at the AGM voted to recommend that the money does go to the Museum.

CTSA Board: Reuben introduced the new CTSA Board. He also added that two others have expressed interest in joining the board. They are going to be invited to the next board meeting. Due to the fact the board has not reached the capacity, no vote is required. At the next board meeting, the CTSA will be deciding on roles. As well as new board members, the CTSA are also looking for a secretary. Any interest should be expressed to Reuben.

CTSA Board members: Reuben introduced the new CTSA Board. There was also an Introduction to Hugh McKinney who is going to be joining going forward. He brings a wealth of knowledge.

Community Action Plan: Hugh McKinney, the CTSA Fan representative in the community, explained more information about the Community Action Plan (CAP). The purpose of this is to increase general support for the club overall as well as increase CTSA membership. As part of this, the CTSA are going to actively engage with the local leagues, as well as local voluntary organisations. This may involve the setting up of a stakeholder group. This group will include the above as well as local councillors and the MP for the area. The work on this will begin in the summer.

CTSA Podcast: Reuben and Sam have started doing a CTSA Podcast. Each episode has so far had over 150 listeners. Those in attendance were encouraged to listen and to share it out widely.

Open discussion – Stadium: Nick Claridge, Deputy Chair of the CTSA, introduced the discussion surrounding the potential purchase of the stadium. This came after the purchase of the stadium



being mentioned at the most recent Fans Forum. Nick highlighted some reasons as to why the purchase of the freehold would be beneficial for Crawley Town FC:

- The club loses million pounds a year. As a result, the club has a negative net worth at any given time
- The club currently has one of the smallest attendances in the EFL and smallest revenue from ticket sales
- The club are currently a tenant paying market related rent to the council. In return, the club are therefore unable to develop the stadium and its current freeholder may be unlikely to do this in the near future due to their financial position
- The introduction of a hotel, restaurant, or a convention centre at the stadium could provide a lucrative non-football revenue stream to the club. For example, MK Dons generate three times more revenue from their non-football related activities
- The profits generated from this can be used to invest in players, staff, and facilities

Nick confirmed that the CTSA only support the acquisition of the stadium and the land if there are certain safeguards in place which will prevent the separation of the club, the stadium and the land.

A healthy debate happened between those on the call surrounding the concerns about what may go wrong in the case of the owners buying the stadium. Especially due to the lack of land in Crawley if something were to happen to the stadium.

Peter Lamb, who was in attendance as a CTSA Member, although was the former leader of the Crawley Borough Council, gave some background as to how the council became the landlord of the football club. He also highlighted that currently there is not a larger wedding venue in Crawley and so, the addition of this at the stadium could be profitable.

Another member said that the council would have a moral responsibility to only sell the freehold to protect the stadium and, unless there is a really good proposal, they may not sell.

Reuben said that this is hopefully the first of many discussions surrounding the CTSA members and the sale of the stadium. There may be the potential to hold a special, in-person meeting, to talk about the stadium. At this meeting, a vote would occur.

Open discussion – Stewarding:

Nick Hilton raised a comment around the stewarding at Crawley games, both home and away. Sam Jordan commented saying that the stewards do need more support however, due to the fact that they work twice a month, aren't paid a lot of money, training can become difficult. The stewarding at home games is probably average compared to other clubs. Throughout English football, fan behaviour has got worse, particularly after Covid. Crawley Town aren't the only clubs who have to deal with pyros etc.

Open discussion – Sam Jordan:



During the meeting, it was commented by multiple people the sterling effort that Sam has put into the role of the Fan representative.

At 9:00pm, the CTSA AGM was closed.